

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 08406 070823Z

17

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00  
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OPIC-03 OMB-01  
TRSE-00 AGRE-00 ACDA-07 SAJ-01 IO-13 DHA-02 LAB-04  
SIL-01 EB-07 /097 W

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R 061834Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9430

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO, CH

SUBJ: BARRETO GOES TO YENAN"

REF: LISBON 8322 (DTG 021716Z DEC 76)

SUMMARY: AGRICULTURE MINISTER BARRETO MADE AN UNANNOUNCED VISIT  
TO THE COMMUNIST STRONGHOLD OF BEJA OVER THE WEEKEND. THE VISIT  
UNDERScoreD THE GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION TO END PCP HEGEMONY  
IN THE ALENTEJO. END SUMMARY.

1. BARRETO GOES TO BEJA: AGRICULTURE MINISTER ANTONIO  
BARRETO MADE AN UNANNOUNCED VISIT TO THE COMMUNIST  
STRONGHOLD OF BEJA. BARRETO SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME  
VISITING SOCIALIST-ORIENTED COOPERATIVES. HE HEARD COMPLAINTS  
OF PCP HARASSMENT BY REPRESENTATIVES OF SOME FIFTY PS COOPERA-  
TIVES BELONGING TO THE RECENTLY-ORGANIZED UNIFIED MOVEMENT

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PAGE 02 LISBON 08406 070823Z

OF COOPERATIVES (MUL. IN REMARKS TO THE ASSEMBLED RURAL

WORKERS, BARRETO SAID THERE WOULD BE NO BACKSLIDING FROM THE FIRM POSITION THE MINISTRY HAS TAKEN SINCE HE TOOK CHARGE. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

- HELP FOR SMALL FARMERS: SMALL FARMERS, RENTERS AND SHARE CROPPERS WILL BE GIVEN ADDITIONAL SUPPORT.
- CREDIT CUTS WILL STICK: COLLECTIVES WHICH DO NOT PROVIDE AN ADEQUATE ACCOUNTING OF PAST CREDITS WILL BE DENIED ACCESS TO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.
- PS WORKERS ENCOURAGED: THOSE WHO HAVE SPLITE AWAY FROM COMMUNIST COLLECTIVES TO FORM INDEPENDENT COOPERATIVES HAVE WON A DOUBLE VICTORY: THEY HAVE WON THE BATTLE OF AGRARIAN REFORM BY GIVING LAND TO THOSE WHO WORK IT; THEY HAVE WOND THE BATTLE AGAINST THOSE (READ PCP) WHO SOUGHT TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES AS THE NEW MASTERS IN THE ALENTEJO.
- PCP FLAYED: THE COMMUNISTS AND THEIR PUPPET UNIONS ARE THE REAL ALLIES OF THE FORMER GREAT LANDLORDS OF THE REGION. THE COMMUNISTS SEEK TO TURN THE ALENTEJO INTO A GIANT PCP COLLECTIVE PROTECTED BY A PRIVATE ARMY.
- PCP SHORTCHANGING WORKERS: COMMUNIST COLLECTIVES HAVE FUNDS IN THE BANKS ARE DECEIVING RURAL WORKERS BY PAYING LESS THAN THE MINIMUM CONTEMPLATED BY LAW.

2. COMMUNISTS COME TO LISBON: A 66-MEMBER COMMUNIST DELEGATION OF RURAL WORKERS WAS TRUCKED IN FROM THE ALENTEJO DEC 3 TO EXPLAIN THE PCP POSITION TO ALL WILLING TO LISTNE. FEW WERE. MINISTER BARRETO WAS ALREADY ON HIS WAY TO THE ALENTEJO. OTHER AUTHORITIES WERE UNAVAILABLE. THE PCP DELEGATION HAD TO CONTENT ITSELF WITH A PRESSCONFERENCE AT INTERSINDICAL HEADQUARTERS. THE THRUST OF THEIR MESSAGE: THE UNION WAS WILLING TO GO ALONG WITH THE RETURN OF LAND TO FORMER OWNERS, BUT ONLY ON THE UNION'S TERMS -- TANTAMOUNT TO A PCP VETO ON THE RETURN OF ANY LAND.

3. COMMENT: BARRETO'S THRUST INTO THE ALENTEJO SERVED SEVERAL PURPOSES.

- IT LIFTED THE SPIRITS OF RURAL WORKERS WHO HAVE BROKEN AWAY FROM COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED COLLECTIVES BY IMPLICITLY PUTTING THE GOVERNMENT STAMP OF APPROVAL ON THE PS STRATEGY OF ENCOURAGING SPLITS FROM THE PCP COLLECTIVES.
- IT PROVIDED BARRETO WITH A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT THE SITUATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 LISBON 08406 070823Z

IN THE ALENTEJO AND GAVE HIM RICH MATERIAL FOR USE IN HIS SCHEDULED DEC 8 ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON AGRICULTURE POLICY.

- MOST IMPORTANTLY, IT SERVED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE GOVERNMENT, WITH FIRM LEADERSHIP IN THE AGRICULTURE MINISTRY, IS DETERMINED TO END PCP HEGEMONY IN THE ALENTEJO. AS BARRETO PUT IT IN BEJA, "THE ALENTEJO WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO BECOME THE SIBERIA OF PORTUGAL."

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** GOVERNMENT REFORM, MINISTERIAL VISITS, COMMUNISTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 06 DEC 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** morefirh  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976LISBON08406  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19761270/aaaacild.tel  
**Line Count:** 115  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 LISBON 8322  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** morefirh  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 18 MAR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <18 MAR 2004 by morefirh>; APPROVED <06 APR 2004 by morefirh>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** BARRETO GOES TO YENAN"  
**TAGS:** PINT, PO, CH, (BARRETO, ANTONIO)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006